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# THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING.

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A SIGNIFICANT feature of the Foundation which Mr. Carnegie called into being two years ago lies in its title: this, at first the non-committal "Carnegie Foundation," became by legislative act "The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching." The defining clause of its purpose is in reality a development of the original conception. In addition to the provision for the "retiring pensions, without regard to race, sex, creed or color, for the teachers of universities, colleges and technical schools in the United States, the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland, who, by reason of long and meritorious service, or by reason of old age, disability or other sufficient reason, shall be deemed entitled to the assistance and aid of this corporation," there appears the further object, "in general, to do and perform all things necessary to encourage, uphold and dignify the profession of the teacher and the cause of higher education." What is thus significant is the conspicuous admission that the cause of teaching in the New World stands in urgent need of advancement.

The career of the "academician" in America is far from being an encouraging, though not necessarily an unhappy, one. Seriously minded foreign critics have readily discovered our unfruitfulness in the profounder realms of original thought; they have looked with astonishment and commiseration upon the varied and exhausting routine of the American University professor; they have naïvely inquired why, in a land overflowing with cream and honey, the academic diet should be restricted to skimmed milk, with an occasional taste of treacle. A similar survey from within the pale brings to light the increasing difficulty of filling academic vacancies with men of the right temper,

the right calibre and the right structural strength; it discloses how naturally those with talent and taste for the academic life are dissuaded by its trials and disabilities, as they are attracted by the larger returns—in professional standing, as well as in emolument—of rival callings; it reveals a considerable measure of academic unrest, which in turn is aggravated by a goading “practical” appraisal of the professor’s services, by an unsuitable and subordinating caste of University government, by the major and minor grievances attaching to a shifting, unadjusted status and policy.

Such being the situation, the question arises: What can an organization and an endowment do to ameliorate it? The academic disabilities must first be diagnosed, then sympathetically and practically treated. Diagnosis reveals that it is the condition of the professor individually and of the academic profession collectively that demands attention. Environment, material provisions, the interests of the student body, the service of the community, the appreciation of the scholar’s calling, the security of the career, the encouragement of lofty phases of human effort—all these are factors in the welfare of the case. The record is not without its encouraging symptoms. All things considered, we have been good providers, and with decided adaptability have cut our garment according to our homespun cloth. It is true that our zeal has often been misapplied (we certainly have more colleges than can find proper support); and our ambitions have brought about a certain watering of the academic stock (witness the frequent discrepancy between the glorified catalogue announcement and the meagre achievement). Yet we point with pride to our costly “plants”—sometimes in condition to bear fruit, and as often with impoverished nurture; we consider minutely and painstakingly, though not always wisely, the needs of students. The argument of return of benefit to the community wins over hesitant legislators to ill-comprehended measures and loosens the purse-strings of public-minded patrons, while incidentally it strews thorns and not roses in the paths of the finer and less practical arts. The social status of the professor is but a reflex of the spirit of the community, and presents a natural range of consistent appreciation or the lack of it. But so far as concerns the making of the career attractive and its rewards modestly adequate, and giving it a setting congenial to

its nature, there is, for the most part, only a lamentable failure to record. The material, administrative and cultural provisions (with few but notable exceptions) have been uncomprehendingly or short-sightedly compromised, or more or less reluctantly relegated to a postponed place on the calendar, and thus, in fact, denied a hearing. The establishment of The Carnegie Foundation is accordingly significant as a worthy and effective recognition of this conspicuous defect in our educational provisions.

The Carnegie Foundation sought a name "which might express the purpose of the Foundation, which has from the beginning been intended by its founder for the upbuilding and the strengthening of the calling of the teacher."\* "It was universally admitted that no wiser attempt could have been made to aid education than one that sought to deal in a wise and generous way with the question of the teacher's financial betterment." The value of the retiring allowance lies in its "lightening the load of anxiety, and in the increasing attractiveness of the professor's life to an ambitious and intelligent man. All this tends to social dignity and stability." The system must be so regulated that "the teacher shall receive his retiring allowance on exactly the same basis as that upon which he receives his active salary, as a part of his academic compensation." The "whole effort" of the Trustees has been "to establish the principle of the retiring allowance in institutions of higher learning upon such a basis that it may come to the professor as a right, not a charity." All this is such sound doctrine, so admirably inspired, so impressively set forth, that it invites the most enthusiastic commendation; and the enthusiasm is the more justified because it is usually the matter of principle in educational provisions that has been conspicuously disregarded. Accordingly, the initiative in applying for the retiring allowance—after twenty-five years of service at any age, or at sixty-five years of age after fifteen years of service—may be taken by the incumbent with no right of any authority to question his prerogative. So vital is this feature of the system, and so wide-spread is likely to be the influence of the Carnegie retiring provisions, that it must presently be admitted that no system of this kind (whether by insurance-like annuities, self-supporting pension-funds, election to *emeritus*

\* The citations are from the first annual report of the president, Mr. H. S. Pritchett.

professorships or otherwise) that fails to cede to the professor the undisputed *right* to demand the allowance, when the conditions are met, shall be ranked as a worthy academic provision. The allowance must not be voted if feasible, granted if advisable, held out as a possibility but not guaranteed, but must be by contract a *right*, a compensation, an *equal* privilege of *all* regularly serving professors.\*

The old-time admonition not to look a gift horse in the mouth has proven itself inapplicable to the days of organized social movements, when wise philanthropy is a difficult art, and intentions as well as probable benefits and drawbacks are carefully scrutinized. All projects have their limitations. It would be unfortunate to establish a habit of associating the Carnegie Foundation with the pensioning of professors and nothing more; its charter stands for more comprehensive measures, among which the pension is but the most practical and financially the most comprehensive benefit. It is, accordingly, proper to inquire whether the system as established will meet the larger end in view. The inquiry at once meets with a consideration of such decided import that its discussion, especially as the issue has not been definitely reached, must be given chief place: I refer to the proposed exclusion of State Universities. Should this exclusion stand, the anticipated amelioration of the professor's status will be seriously and lamentably curtailed. These institutions are so numerous, the type of men they attract to their faculties so desirable, the aggregate of their influence so extensive, that a system of retiring allowance that fails to include them cannot be regarded as likely to effect that general strengthening of the

\* The financial distribution of the Carnegie allowances seems as generous and as just as circumstances permit. Briefly, it gives to *all* institutions of proper standard (provided that they are without sectarian control) a possibility to be "accredited" to the Carnegie Foundation. The professors of such "accredited" colleges are entitled to retiring allowances on the age basis (sixty-five years) of \$1,000 for the first \$1,200 of their salary, and \$50 for each \$100 of salary above \$1,200; on the service basis (twenty-five years) of \$800 (instead of \$1,000), and of \$40 (instead of \$50), said allowance to be increased by one per cent. of the salary for each year of service beyond twenty-five, and no retiring allowance to exceed \$3,000. Further, widows of those entitled to retiring allowances shall receive one-half of the allowance to which their husbands were entitled. Leaves of absence may be counted as periods of service, but not to exceed one year in seven. Teachers in professional departments whose principal work is outside the profession of teaching are not eligible. Holders of allowances are debarred from active connection with colleges or universities.

academic career, which has been set forth as the inspiring motive of the Foundation. Moreover, there would thus be introduced into the situation, already complex and handicapped, a further line of division separating institutions with benefit of pension from those without. Instead of unifying and dignifying the calling, a new disturbing element would be added. Against the partial benefit to the participating institutions, would have to be opposed the increased unrest and dissatisfaction among those excluded, the consequent striving in advancing years to be enrolled among the favored institutions, if need be, by sacrifice of worthy interests and advantages. If the Carnegie Foundation is really to advance the cause of teaching, and be more than a distributing agency for the relief of indigent academic old age, the benefit must be fairly equably available to the entire group of those by service, station and attainment entitled thereto.

I had written these paragraphs when the discussion of the topic before the Association of American Universities (in November, 1906) became available in print. The additional emphasis of the above position furnished by this record is welcome. It seemed admitted "that the professors in the State institutions were the same sort of men as the professors in the endowed institutions doing the same sort of work" (President Eliot, Harvard); that "in the most favorable States . . . the State University president would hesitate to take up the matter [of pensions] with the legislature," "that from the point of expediency it is wholly impracticable" (President Van Hise, Wisconsin); that "if the professors in an endowed institution find the pension a part of their earnings, similar pensions have been earned by the professors in the State institutions," "that it might have been in some respects more just if the Carnegie Foundation had been given to the State institutions only" (President Jordan, Leland Stanford); that "the line drawn between the State Universities and the endowed universities of public character . . . would be false to the essential facts of present American society," and that it would require nice discrimination "to determine in what sense my own is a State University in which Cornell is not" (President Wheeler, California).

I have chosen to leave unchanged the above statement of the critical issue relative to the admission of the State Universities to the system of retiring allowances of the Carnegie Foundation,

in order that it may reflect the optimistic hope and independent judgment uninfluenced by the appearance (in March, 1907) of the Bulletin devoted to the question.\* This document advances the discussion and separates the issues. First, it is conceded on all sides that the State Universities represent the same type of ideals, purposes, constituency and needs as do those of private foundation, and thus through their best exemplars present just the situation which a foundation for the advancement of teaching should minister to and support. Secondly, the issue emerges that considers what the effect of exclusion from the Foundation will be upon State Universities, and how they will meet it. Thirdly and vitally, appears the rationale of the proposed exclusion, the principles and policy underlying any valid decision. Lastly, it should be recorded with unlimited appreciation that the issue has not been allowed to be obscured by the question of adequate financial support.

President Pritchett takes the position that the one factor determining the character of our higher educational institutions, and in turn determining their status with reference to participation in the measures inaugurated to advance the cause of teaching, is the manner of their financial support. He argues further that the central policy of a State University, the directing source of its every aim and activity, is that of employing in its interests only such moneys as result from public taxation. There are thus "two radically different plans of support and conduct of higher institutions of learning," the one appealing to "the generosity of the individual citizen," the other to "the responsibility and the patriotism of the whole mass of citizens." The present pages form no proper arena for marshalling the support of either conclusion; and I must be content in rebuttal with the expression of the conviction, shared by many in close touch with educational policy, that neither of these two positions has more than a formal and decidedly limited pertinence. It is probably not an exag-

\* Bulletin No. 1 of the "Foundation" contains the well-framed resolutions of the National Association of State Universities, a memorandum submitted in behalf of the University of Toronto by Dr. Maurice Hut-  
ton, a careful review of the general situation by Professor Eddy (University of Minnesota)—all arguing in favor of the admission of State-supported institutions—and a report by President Pritchett containing material of much value relative to State institutions, together with the reasons for his personal conclusion that they should not be included in the benefits of the Carnegie Foundation. Decisive action in the matter must await the meeting of the Board of Trustees.

geration to say that their legitimacy would be questioned *in toto*. It would be denied that it is legitimate to appraise an educational foundation by the source from which its treasurer receives its funds. It would be denied that what a State University is and does reflects an underlying conviction that State support is the inspiring and saving grace of its efforts. On the contrary, such support has frequently been set forth as simply a result of a practical situation, this being the only possible method of securing and maintaining Colleges and Universities under the geographical and cultural conditions. The other phase of the argument is freer from the fluctuations affecting inferences from complex data, and lies closer to ascertainable fact. Many of the State Universities have received and welcomed, and have made efforts to secure, private endowments for all sorts of purposes, particularly for such as could not readily or consistently (according to prevalent standards) be supported from the available funds. Doubtless a still larger number have been prevented from indicating a similar willingness by a scarcity of well-disposed capitalists. Again, we have the statement of the Association of State Universities that "it is already known that the trustees of many State Universities would welcome the provisions for pensions by the Carnegie Foundation." Unquestionably, the view ascribed by President Pritchett to the State Universities exists in some form; but the nature and motive thereof vary from one situation to another, and nowhere achieve such commanding position as he accords to them. The view is, indeed, more in the nature of a sentiment, a prejudice, and would change with the personality of the prospective donor and the character of his donation. That it represents a formative educational policy certainly remains to be proven. If the adherence to such educational policy is regarded as a sufficient ground for exclusion from the benefits of the Carnegie Foundation, it would certainly be well to ascertain how many State Universities, and which ones, persist in such policy. Conceding, as far as may be, the justness of the ascription to the State Universities of the policy in question, it does not appear that the policy is theirs in any such sense as it is the policy of denominational institutions to appeal to sectarian support. Yet these readily qualify for the Carnegie Foundation, and properly so, by modifying so much of their organization as may be necessary to establish a claim to an unrestricted public



service. The major premise—that the appeal to public support should exclude from a participation in the benefits of a foundation for the advancement of teaching—is equally in need of convincing demonstration.

As to the practical effects of the exclusion of State Universities, Mr. Pritchett believes that circumstances will bring to them a comparable benefit from their own funds, as “the legislatures in those States in which the strongest universities are situated have not yet failed to meet any want of the State Universities which those in authority believed to be a vital one.” The State University presidents, with greater emphasis, record their conviction that such exclusion will seriously hamper the growth of the institutions whose interest they serve, that only the equal participation in the benefits of the Carnegie Foundation “will relieve them from a serious embarrassment, which they otherwise will be obliged to face.” Yet more impressive is the foreboding of Professor Eddy:

“It cannot but be regarded in the light of a great calamity if your Board shall feel itself compelled to refrain from entering into relations with so large and important a fraction of the highest educational institutions in so large a section of the country. . . . You thereby draw a line tending to render the teaching service distinctly less desirable, and introduce a motive for the ablest men to withdraw from their faculties, a consummation which, under the circumstances, would be greatly deplored by every lover of sound learning, and you at the same time impose a penalty which these universities will be likely to suffer the effects of in a way materially to affect their future.”

It thus becomes a serious question whether the Carnegie Foundation is likely to achieve the purposes so wisely conceived, if it invites the defeat of its own expressed purposes by preventing that harmonious advancement of the profession which only a movement of national scope, liberally carried out, can secure.

The dominant importance of this issue compels me to present the remaining considerations relevant to the advancement of teaching, in decidedly foreshortened perspective. And, first, in regard to practical measures, it may be suggested that the alternative is not wholly that of inclusion or exclusion. It is possible that such a Foundation would consider the admission of an institution to its benefits provided that the Carnegie system of pensions be adopted *in toto*, and that the institution thus benefited supply half or other share of the cost. While discrimi-

nation in this matter would be difficult, the policy itself is not antagonistic to the underlying cause of the advancement of the teacher's status. Allied to such policy is the general consideration whether the better mode of introducing the system of retiring allowances is not this same one of aiding an institution to establish a system of its own. It is an open question whether the advantages of a large influence, a benefit to more institutions upon the basis of the same resources, quite compensate the possible embarrassment of placing the beneficiary under a sense of obligation to a particular institution, the complexities of fitting such a system to the shifting status caused by migration from one faculty to another, and, most formidably, the gradual interference or curtailment of a right so that it takes on the guise of a charitable dispensation. Experience alone can decide whether the present policy of absolute grant and control of all allowances sanctioned by the Foundation is the only feasible one. Pertinent to this consideration is still another: namely, whether a most useful form of partial retirement might not be introduced. Such provision would enable a selected group of men in the prime of life to devote their best years with some singleness of purpose (and with undiminished income) to the highest achievement that in them lies, while yet retaining their academic connections.

In pursuance of such considerations, we meet the fundamental inquiry whether a decided increase in salaries would not be far more effective in advancing the career of the professor than the most liberal of pension systems. There can be little doubt that it would; for such relief would at once release, for less hampered, more efficient service, energies now overstrained or given over to the stern necessities of earning small supplements to inadequate incomes; it would encourage latent and struggling ambition, lighten care and make possible a more healthy-minded attitude towards the expenses of life. It would affect the lives of men in their prime, determine in some cases the issue between immediate necessity and far-reaching policy, quicken the somewhat depressed pulse of the academic arteries, and do much to dissolve that unadjusted, restless attitude so detrimental, especially in sensitive temperaments, to the realization of their highest capabilities. The importance of this desideratum is out of all proportion to the space that can be given it here. Doubtless, in the main, it is an unrealizable project as the work of a Foundation, and to

many institutions would not be acceptable as an enforced policy imposed by an extraneous organization. Yet it falls within the scope of the Carnegie Foundation to emphasize, by all possible channels of influence, the underlying objects of its existence; in this instance such emphasis may prevent the use of the retiring allowance as a compensation for the more sorely needed increase of active income. In the end, relief in one part of the organism is relief to the whole; and the practicability of the retiring system renders it the best first step in the advancement of the academic profession.

To ameliorate conditions requires, most of all, a sympathetic comprehension of the conditions. In the academic world these are most complex, in great part intangible, dealing as they must with the spirit of the environment, the geniality of the intellectual climate. Such conditions result from traditions, from the impress of personalities, from the ideals that animate the controlling forces of a University, which, unlike a corporation, has a soul. Admittedly, these influences cannot be purchased, do not come with endowments or buildings. All that money can do—and it is a most worthy service—is to remove the obstacles that deprive these cherished influences of a fair and prospering nurture. The wisest expenditure of money is that which favors the removal of disabilities, and the consequent shaping of policy by the highest standards. Much of what is done and of what is left undone in academic administration is defended or excused on the ground of practical necessity or expediency. If some such organization as the Carnegie Foundation had appeared at the critical moment with the philanthropic, even though paternal, injunction: “Do what wise policy demands, and the financial obligation will be taken care of,” many of the most serious educational mistakes would not have been committed.

Efficiency in high-grade pursuits is most difficult to secure, even with favoring circumstances. “To do his best work,” says Professor Palmer, whose discerning words I shall presently cite further, “one need not merely to live, but to live well.” There must be a free, an expanding, an adjusted life. In the concrete the advancement of teaching becomes a personal problem. The wisest endowment of education is the endowment of men. To facilitate the efforts of those engaged in the service of the higher learning—and the best of these are, doubtless, the ones most sen-

sitive to the influences that retard academic efficiency—is the purpose alike of the Carnegie Foundation, as of every promising aid to the advancement of intellectual ends.

Let me once more make concession to the practical bent of the national temper and bring this policy to bear upon a definite situation. The insecurity of the academic career is due in large measure to unwholesome administrative policies, notably the over-emphasis of administrative functions. From the days of Socrates, when it was rated unworthy to receive pay for teaching, to the present era of enlightenment, when we speak of “three-thousand-dollar professors,” there has been no easy solution of the relation of intellectual service to reward. For the expression of the ideal as well as the real formulation of this issue, I give way to Professor Palmer:\*

“The professors, like many professional men, give in lump and get in lump, without precise balance. The whole notion of bargain is inapplicable in such a sphere where the gains of him who serves and him who is served coincide; and that is largely the case with the professions. Harvard College pays me for doing what I would gladly pay it for allowing me to do. No professional man, then, thinks of giving according to measure. Once engaged, he gives his best, his personal interest, himself. . . . What is accepted is in the nature of a fee, gratuity or consideration, which enables him who receives it to maintain a certain expected mode of life. The idea sometimes advanced, that the professions can be ennobled by paying them powerfully, is fantastic. Their great attraction is their removal from sordid aims. More money should certainly be spent on several of them. Their members should be better protected against want, anxiety, neglect and bad conditions of labor. To do his best work, one needs not merely to live, but to live well.”

The more formal term “honorarium” suggests that the professor is paid in honor, and not by a measured compensation for service. The whole situation implies, as is well recognized by the English usage of the term “living,” that the incumbent must be supported in a manner suitable to his station. Clearly, in so unadjusted a society as ours, no single or simple set of circumstances is sufficiently established to fix the standard for so seemingly undefined a calling as that of a professor. Yet this does not condone the total neglect of principle and the acceptance of the readier but misleading solution of circumstance. Speaking broadly, we aim to adhere to these principles; but somewhere

\* “The Atlantic Monthly,” April, 1907.

and somehow the practice of the economically distinct business world insinuates itself and renders chaos of cosmos. Under the guise of "rewards of merit," a policy of discrimination brings it about that the president undertakes to calculate the professor's personal equation, and announces the result in dollars and cents. Piling into the academic caldron such incongruous ingredients as reputation, popularity, size of classes, value as a faculty drudge, sympathy with administrative measures, length of service, volume of original research, oratorical persuasiveness, size of family, pertinacity of friends, impression upon the Board, the incantation is pronounced, the stew clarifies, and the salary appears at the bottom of the pot. It is too obvious to need urging that salaries must somehow be fixed, and that some body of men must fix them; it should be equally obvious that there is an academically just and proper mode of reaching this end in which principle and system must be dominant. I must perforce leave undiscussed what is and what is not the right policy in this matter and the right mode of its encouragement; I desire only to urge that it falls within the scope of a Foundation for the advancement of teaching to inquire into such situations and determinedly to aid the better cause against the practical pressure of the worse.

Last as first, with regret or without it, it must be admitted that the temper of universities and the conditions under which they thrive in the New World do not justify the hope that they will from within solve rightly and promptly many of the situations that confront them. Accordingly, an extraneous organization, powerful by endowment and by singleness of purpose, that should step in and further the realization of worthy ideals, and practically should contend for the removal of disabilities, stood as a great, possibly the greatest, need of American education. The wisdom of this conception, as of the first steps in its application, should be appreciatively recorded by all who cherish the intellectual life. May the same spirit of cooperation in which the universities have accepted the first-fruits of the Foundation extend to such other measures as from time to time may be offered as encouragements to the advancement of teaching!

JOSEPH JASTROW.